



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
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## Third Regional Seminar for the Asia-Pacific Region Parliaments on Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals



**Islamabad, Pakistan, 13 - 14 September 2022**

Organized jointly by the Inter-Parliamentary Union  
and the National Assembly of Pakistan

### PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

#### Monday, 12 September 2022

Arrival of delegates

#### Tuesday, 13 September 2022

09:00-10:00 Registration

10:00-11:00 **Inaugural session**  
**Group photo**

11:00-11:15 **Setting the scene: SDG implementation in Asia-Pacific**

This presentation will provide an overview of progress with the implementation of the SDG agenda in the region, highlighting the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and emerging challenges in the social, economic and environmental spheres.

11:15-12:30 **Session I: Envisioning inclusive development: Socio-economic challenges in Asia-Pacific**

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, it was estimated that around 400 million people in the region were living in extreme poverty, below the lower international poverty line, and that 1.2 billion people were living below the higher international poverty line, accounting for more than a quarter of the region's population. Due to the impact of the pandemic on the region's economies, with depressed international demand, job losses and bankruptcies, poverty has stopped declining for the first time in two decades. Marginalized and vulnerable segments of the population have suffered the effects of the crisis more acutely. This session will discuss how COVID-19 recovery can enhance economic resilience, adopt an inclusive approach, and ensure resources are not diverted from sustainable development.

*The presentation will be followed by a debate with delegates.*

12:30 – 13:00 **Regional launch of Global Parliamentary Report**

13:00-14:00 Lunch and prayer break

**A) Ending hunger and malnutrition**

Little progress has been made towards ending hunger and malnutrition in the region. A growing body of research demonstrates the negative consequences of food insecurity for the most vulnerable groups, especially women's and children's health and developmental outcomes, including cognitive development and school achievement, as well as overall health. The COVID-19 pandemic further risks pushing people into a state of food insecurity. The aim of the debate on this topic is to discuss ways to successfully address population needs through the promotion of adequate policies and laws across sectors, including health, agriculture, education and gender equality, and to implement the SDGs by maximizing the available domestic resources for nutrition.

**B) Promoting quality education and decent work for youth**

Over 500 million young people live on less than US\$2 a day. 43 per cent of the global youth labour force is either unemployed or trapped in working poverty. While youth offers many of the world's poorest countries a demographic dividend, young people are at the forefront of many of the world's emerging political movements calling for economic equality. Education provides young people with the capability to become economically active, contribute to democratic and peaceful societies and improve individual wellbeing. Creating quality learning environments and youth employment could contribute not only to reducing disparities, but also have a multiplier effect for development. This session will focus on the importance of ensuring quality inclusive and equitable education opportunities for all – regardless of their gender, race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, religion, disability, wealth, political beliefs, or any other status – and of promulgating laws that favour full and productive employment and decent work for all.

**C) Ensuring equitable access to health**

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on health systems and national budgets, with countries facing challenges in ensuring equitable health outcomes and sustaining efforts towards universal health coverage. Inequitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccinations between and within countries is further limiting countries' ability to contain the virus and focus on making progress towards health targets. The session will present findings from the follow-up process on implementation of the IPU resolution *Achieving universal health coverage by 2030: The role of parliaments in ensuring the right to health*, and explore what actions parliaments are taking to improve access to health for vulnerable and marginalized groups.

09:45-10:00	Recap of day 1 proceedings
10:00-11:30	<p><b>Session II: Parliamentary mechanisms and practices to institutionalize the SDGs</b></p> <p>Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, many parliaments established different mechanisms and practices to better deliver on the SDGs. Some of them created dedicated SDGs bodies, others updated the remit of existing standing committees accordingly, others put in place specific procedures to mainstream the SDGs into their core functions (i.e. law-making, oversight, budget, representation). This session will present some of the existing parliamentary practices to support the implementation of the SDGs and will offer the opportunity to participants to share their experience, discuss challenges and lessons learnt to further scale up these efforts.</p> <p>The presentation will be followed by a debate with delegates.</p>
11:30-11:45	Tea break
11:45-13:00	<p><b>Session III: Women at the centre of the development agenda</b></p> <p>This session will focus on understanding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women and identifying the challenges and root causes of discrimination that curtail women's rights. A case study of Pakistan's cross-party Women's Parliamentary Caucus will be presented. What started as a vision in the Parliament of Pakistan is now an international good practice, having been successfully replicated in over a dozen other parliaments as well as in provincial and regional legislatures. This session will explore SDG Goal 5 and the ways in which gender equality supports the achievement of all the other SDGs. Participants will be invited to reflect on how to integrate Goal 5 into their national legislation, and how to find effective approaches that promote the political, social and economic empowerment of all women.</p> <p>The presentation will be followed by a debate with delegates.</p>
13:00-14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:15	<p><b>Session IV: Building resilience to preserve our common future</b></p> <p>In our increasingly interconnected world, risks and impacts are transferred across nations and around the globe. Disasters are complex, interdependent events and their rising social and economic impacts require a fundamental shift in how disaster risks are managed to protect economic and development gains and achieve the SDGs. Climate change is increasing the frequency and complexity of natural hazard events. There is a link between habitat loss, environmental degradation and climate change on the one hand, and the emergence of novel zoonotic diseases that are transmitted between animals and humans, such as coronaviruses, on the other. This link calls for a sound environmental response to the pandemic. This session will explore approaches to build resilience by reducing disaster risks and promoting a sustainable recovery from COVID-19.</p> <p>The presentation will be followed by a debate with delegates.</p>
15:15 – 16:00	<p><b>Closing plenary: Leaving no one behind – The way forward</b></p> <p><b>Adoption of the outcome document</b></p>